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THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

The James Sprunt Historical Publications

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF

The North Carolina Historical Society

J. G. DE ROULHAC HAMILTON } *Editors*
HENRY MCGILBERT WAGSTAFF }

VOL. 11

NO. 2



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The German Settlers in Lincoln County and Western North Carolina

CHAPEL HILL, N. C.
PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY
1912

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**THE NORTH CAROLINA CONSTITUTION OF 1776
AND ITS MAKERS**

By
FRANK NASH

THE NORTH CAROLINA CONSTITUTION OF 1776 AND ITS MAKERS*

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the North Carolina Historical Society:

I am glad to be with you tonight. I esteem it both a privilege and an honor to address this venerable Association. I have chosen a somewhat hackneyed subject—The Constitution of 1776 and Its Makers—but, from the nature of that constitution and the difficulties under which it was conceived and promulgated, it must have a perennial interest to North Carolinians.

If I were forced to select the year which best illustrated the character of the people of North Carolina, in all the years of its history, from Roanoke Island to the present, I should choose the year 1775—a year of suspense and yet of action and of preparation. The last Colonial Assembly had met in New Bern April 4th, only to be dissolved by the irate governor Martin, on the 8th. The second Provincial Convention had met at the same place, April 3rd and had adjourned on the 7th, after empowering John Harvey, or in case of his death, Samuel Johnston, to order, at his discretion as to time, an election of delegates for a third convention at Hillsboro. The battle of Lexington had been fought April 19th, and the news of it, by express, had entered the province Wednesday, May 3rd, and, passing by Edenton, Beaufort County, Bath, New Bern, Onslow County, Wilmington and Brunswick, had left it at the Boundary House, Tuesday, May 9th. Governor Martin the last week in May had fled from New Bern and, on June 2nd, had taken refuge at Fort Johnson. Finding that fort not secure from attack, he had had it dismantled and had boarded the “Cruizer”, sloop of war in the Cape Fear river. The battle of Bunker Hill had been fought June 17th, and troops and munitions of war were being hurried to America by the British government, and its Atlantic fleet was hovering off the coast. A large majority of the Regulators in Orange, Guilford, Rowan, Surry and Anson, and nearly all the Highland-

*A paper read before the North Carolina Historical Society, February 5, 1912.

ers in Cumberland, were still loyal to king and parliament. Here and there throughout the province, too, were groups of men—merchants, officeholders and their dependents—who were no less loyal, while everywhere and in all sections were to be found neutrals,—those who from constitutional timidity, or conservatism, could not take a decided stand; and in the extreme east and middle sections of the province were many Quakers,—all non-combatants. Over against these were the patriot Whigs, a minority of the people of North Carolina, at that time, but led by the best, the wisest, the boldest and firmest of their neighbors,—men whose character and attainments gave greater force and power to the movement, than mere numbers could give it. These in the latter part of 1774 and early in 1775 had organized Committees of Safety confessedly exercising a usurped, but very necessary, authority, governed with an extraordinary firmness and boldness, tempered, however, by as remarkable moderation and wisdom. They dealt strictly with open foes,—they must recant or leave,—but very tenderly and considerately with those who might be won to the cause. These, unmolested, were either left to persuasive force of events as they unfolded, or were tactfully urged to make common cause with their neighbors, in resistance against oppression. The power these Committees exercised was practically absolute. It could not be efficient without being so,—but it was rarely exercised oppressively. The public safety, with foes at home and abroad, was, of course the supreme law, and all who threatened it must be dealt with firmly and expeditiously. There could be no half measures here. Safety could be found only in overawing foes about them, while they prepared to meet those from abroad. If this application of the law of self defence worked hardship to individuals, it was because they were willing to put themselves in opposition to it, and, doing so, they must bear the consequences.

These Committees in reality constituted the only civil government in the province, though Governor Martin, before he was driven from New Bern, by the Committee of that town and after he had taken refuge in the sloop of war, "Cruizer," pretended to exercise the functions of government. He was, however, a mere

paper governor, enforcing his authority by paper proclamations; dangerous only from his intrigues with the Highlanders, Regulators and negro slaves. There were no courts, save those of justices of the peace and a few courts of Oyer and Terminer, held, by order of the Assembly, in the fall of 1774 and the early summer of 1775 by Alexander Martin, Francis Nash and Richard Caswell. There was no military organization, except a few independent companies and the militia, which in some counties was preparing itself for defence by more assiduous drilling and more frequent musters, though men, everywhere, were looking about them for implements of destruction, furbishing old arms, purchasing new, seeing that their powder horns and bullet pouches were filled, and anxiously searching everywhere for the source of a new supply of powder and lead, when the old should be exhausted. Away from the mail route in the east men ran together at the coming of every chance traveller to hear the latest news, and the mail, itself, with its rare newspaper, containing the latest from Virginia or Massachusetts, drew great crowds. And yet throughout it all there was little excitement. Awed men were by the stately movement of great events, curious as to the present and solicitous as to the future, but they were ready to meet that future with steadfast firmness and undaunted courage. There was practically no civil government, practically no courts, yet among a populace, in some sections so free and independent that they were almost in a state of nature, there was no anarchy and little lawlessness. It was the Anglo-Saxon at his best,—preparing to defend his imperilled liberties in the midst of revolution. There was no dethroning of God to set up a Goddess of Reason; no chattering and shrieking and running hither and thither; no following of harlots and foul-mouthed fishwives to rapine and arson and murder; no savage slaughter of the innocent; no insane revelling in blood for vengeance's sake; in short no guillotine, no Robespierre, no reign of terror. Instead, their instinct for self government asserted itself, and, at the call of Samuel Johnston, they met at Hillsboro in August 1775 to organize and set in motion the machinery for the new state. They did not know that they were forming a new state; they did not

intend their action to be understood as a declaration of independence. But that was the interpretation put upon it by the British government, and from the vantage ground of the accomplished fact, viewing the sequence of events we can see plainly that the British Government was right in this interpretation; that St. Matthew's church, Hillsboro, was the birth place of the State of North Carolina, and the birth time was the twenty days in August and September 1775, during which the first Provincial Congress met at that place.* The Whig leaders there were wise and moderate and conservative, almost beyond understanding. They insisted even after the Battle of Lexington and when the British Government was sending armies and fleets to coerce them, that they might take up arms against that government while they remained loyal to the person and dynasty of the king, a position that is totally indefensible to the lawyer and statesman, and many of these leaders were lawyers and statesmen. The very test which they prepared for the members of this congress to sign and which they all signed, began, "We, the subscribers, professing our allegiance to the king, and acknowledging the constitutional executive powers of government," &c., then they proceed and assume all the functions of government itself, executive, legislative and judicial. It was not timidity that caused this, but a strong disinclination to break the old ties and offend against the old tradi-

*Says Hegel in his *Philosophy of History*: "In the history of the world something else is generally brought out by means of the actions of individual men than they themselves aim at, or attained than they directly know of or will; they achieve their own ends, but something farther is brought to pass in connection with their acts, which also lies therein, but which did not lie in their consciousness or purposes." As in the instance given in this paper, Captain Ashe, it seems to me, disregards this principle, when he attempts to attach the oral tradition of a Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence to the Resolves of May 31st. An oral tradition of such declaration presupposes a general understanding, or consciousness, among the actors themselves, that they were declaring independence. There is no more in these Resolves to constitute them a conscious declaration of independence than there was in the action of the Hillsboro Congress. That they appeared to Governor Martin, and appear to us, to have been in practical effect, a declaration, is not important, if they were not a conscious declaration by the actors themselves, and the evidence is very strong that they were not.

tions. The sanctity of their oath of allegiance, the many ties that bound them to the mother country, the home of their fathers, from which they had derived all their liberties, the dangers of an untried democracy, all, gave them pause until every hope of a peaceful issue was utterly gone. In this, too, they were but reflecting the sentiment which prevailed in the Continental Congress. Hooper, Hewes and Caswell, the delegates to that Congress, were all at Hillsboro, and no doubt went there with the intention of repressing any premature, untimely and unwise action, and Hooper was the author of the Address to the people, made by the Congress, which went even further than the Test in assuring the world of their loyalty to King George and their disinclination to independence. Notwithstanding this, however, they proceeded to create a state and to give it a temporary form of government. They appointed a Provincial Council and provided for District and local Committees, and conferred upon them plenary powers; they organized the military,—Continental, minute men and militia,—and appointed the officers thereof; they emitted paper money and provided for its redemption from the proceeds of a specific tax; in short they took to themselves and exercised all the functions of government. The form, itself, was, it is true, crude, yet it was efficient and served its purpose well. Events, however, were moving too irresistibly for those who would stay them. On April 12th 1776 the Provincial Congress at Halifax instructed its delegates to the Continental Congress to vote for independence. Logic and consistency, feeble always in great crises, yielded to the compelling demands of conditions. Having thus clarified the atmosphere by removing themselves from a false position, these makers and builders of a state sat themselves down to frame a written constitution for it. On April 14th a committee was appointed to prepare a temporary civil constitution, with such men as Samuel Johnston, Abner Nash, Cornelius Harnett, Thomas Jones and Thomas Burke, on it. The term, temporary, was used, probably, because the intention was that this constitution should be in effect only until the difficulties between Great Britain and America had been composed,—in this following the example of South Carolina, whose recently adopted

constitution they had before them at the time. It is a little remarkable that in all of the discussions of a constitution and form of government, there is nothing said of their reason for deeming a written constitution essential. Why, in other words, did not these constitution makers content themselves with a declaration of independence and simple legislative action thereupon in the establishment of a new government? There seems never to have been any suggestion that a written constitution was not necessary. On the contrary, from the beginning, they assumed that it was. The following it seems to me explains this:—1st. The Declaration of Independence, left them without a government, without laws, without a constitution, as though marooned upon a desert island, to use Judge Ashe's phrase in *Bayard vs. Singleton*. The words Constitution and constitutional had a well known signification to them and were frequently used by them, long before their separation from the British government. They were constantly appealing to the British Constitution in defense of their resistance to the oppressive Acts of the British Parliament. Now that constitution was partly written and partly unwritten; written, Magna Carta of King John and King Edward I, the Petition of Right, the Habeas Corpus Act and the Bill of Rights; unwritten, the immemorial principles upon which the government had been administered, found in precedents, legislative and judicial and the immutable laws of justice, reason and right:—the first, plain, simple and direct, couched in language understood of all, and always successfully appealed to, in defense of a private right or in the remedy of a public wrong; the last, nebulous and at large, not capable of practical application in public affairs. So when they come to make their constitution of government as they called it, it must be written,

2nd. They were familiar with the operation of the New England Charters, and knew how often they had stood between the freemen of these provinces and public outrage or private wrong. Indeed Samuel Johnston refers to the Charter of Connecticut as its Constitution at this very time. Seeing then that chartered rights are always better safeguarded, they must charter their own rights.

3rd. They were revolutionists. They were setting up a new state. The questions the world would ask, and which it had a right to ask, would be these:—What kind of government are these insurrectionists to set up? Are they capable of self-government? Is there to be a newcomer among the nations of the earth, or are these American colonists factionists and rebels, soon to be crushed into obedience by the power of Great Britain? So, for political, almost world wide reasons, they must write their constitution.

However this may be, immediately upon the appointment of this committee, it entered upon the consideration of a permanent constitution, and divergence of views appeared as soon as the subject was opened. It was at this Congress, that of April 1776, that the discussion was hottest and most bitter, yet Willie Jones, who is generally credited with having been leader of the Radicals, was not a member and was not even present in Halifax, having gone to Charlotte, Georgia, as Superintendent of Indian Affairs. John Webb was the member from Halifax elected to take Jones' seat.* Nor was Richard Caswell a member of this committee, though he was a member of the Congress and present. The Committee sat every night. Of course the discussions, at first, were general, in which probably each member expressed his individual views. It developed that a few of them were advocates for Franklin's plan of a single legislative body. They soon yielded to the sentiment against it, and the crucial difference was reached. The majority inclined to a pure democracy; the minority under Johnston, leaned to representative republicanism, with constitutional guarantees to individuals as well as minorities against arbitrary legislation. In a special degree, they advocated the independence of the judiciary, by providing that they should hold office during good behavior and should be elected by the legislature or appointed by the governor, with the consent of the Council, or the Senate. The limitation of the suffrage, also, caused much discussion, many of the members of the committee being in favor of manhood, as opposed to freehold, suffrage. It is supposed that the leaders in this free suffrage movement, at

*10 C. R. 502.

that Congress, were Thomas Person of Granville, Waightstill Avery of Mecklenburg and Matthew Locke of Rowan, and all the indications are that they had, at first, a majority with them. Samuel Johnston wrote to Iredell on April 17th:—"I must confess our prospects are at this time very gloomy. Our people are about forming a constitution. From what I can at present collect of their plan, it will be impossible for me to take any part in the execution of it." On the next day, the 18th, he withdrew from the committee in disgust, but difficulties were smoothed over by Thomas Jones, and he again took part in the deliberations. On April 25th the committee reported a "temporary Civil Constitution," which on the next day was debated in the Committee of the Whole.* This debate developed an even greater diversity of opinion in the Congress than had appeared in the committee, and on the following Tuesday the whole subject was laid aside. On April 30th a committee was appointed to propose a temporary form of government until the end of the next Congress, thus indicating that the formation of a permanent constitution was to be the principal work of that body. Indeed Thomas Jones wrote to Iredell on May 7th:—"The Constitution for the present is over, and will be taken up again next October." The temporary form of government adopted by this Congress was very similar to that adopted by the Hillsboro Congress, with an abolition of the Dis-

*Thomas Jones in his letter to Iredell, April 28th, 1776, 1 McRee's Iredell, pages 277-8, says:—"You must pardon me for not giving you a line ere this but if you really knew the amazing fatigue of business several of us have gone through, you would, I am fully assured, most readily forgive me. In my time I have been used to business, both public and private, but never yet experienced one-fourth part of what I now am necessarily obliged to undertake—we have no rest either day or night. The first thing done in the morning is to prepare every matter necessary for the day—after breakfast to Congress,—there generally from 9 to 3 o'clock—no sitting a minute after dinner, but to the different committees; perhaps one person will be obliged to attend four of them between 4 o'clock and 9 at night—then to supper, and this generally brings us to 12 at night. This has been the life I have led since my arrival here,—in short I never was so hurried. . . . The Constitution goes on but slowly. The outlines of it made its appearance in the House for the first time yesterday, and by the last of this week it, probably, may be finished. The plan as it now stands will be subject to

strict committees, a change of names, and some change of the personnel of the old Provincial Council, now, the Council of Safety. Among others, Samuel Johnston was superseded by Willie

Jones as the representative of the Congress on this new Council.

It is here that we have the first evidence of a partisan division among the patriot leaders of the Revolutionists. On August 8th, the Council of Safety in session at Halifax resolved, "that it be recommended to the good people of this now independent state of North Carolina to pay the greatest attention to the election to be held on the 15th day of October next of delegates to represent them in Congress, and to have particularly in view this important consideration. That it will be the business of the delegates then chosen not only to make laws for the good government of, but also to form a constitution for this state, that this last is the corner stone of all law, so it ought to be fixed and permanent, and that according as it is well or ill ordered, it must tend in the first degree to promote the happiness or misery of the state."

They recommended also that five delegates be sent from each county. Jones in his *Defence* regards these resolutions as a partisan movement against Samuel Johnston, but he is notoriously prejudiced against the radicals, and in favor of the conservatives, especially Samuel Johnston. It is much more probable that they had no such evil motive, as on their face they are eminently appropriate. (However this may be, it is certain that a great

many alterations; at present it is in the following manner:— 1st, a House of the representatives of the people—all freeholders of one year standing to vote; and, 2nd, A Legislative Council—to consist of one member from each County in the Province—to sit as an Upper House, and these two Houses are to be a check on each other, no law can be made without the consent of both, and none but freeholders will have a right to vote for members of this Council. Next an Executive Council, to consist of a President and six Councillors; to be always sitting; to do all official business of the government—such as managing the army, issuing commissions, military and civil, filling up vacancies; calling two branches of the legislature together; receiving foreign ambassadors, &c., &c. The President and Council to be elected annually, as also the Assembly and Legislative Council—but have some reason to believe the President will have the right to be chosen yearly for three years successively, and no more until the expiration of three years thereafter. So much for the outlines of the Constitution." All of which shows the influence of the previous South Carolina Constitution.

effort was made during the summer and fall to defeat the more prominent conservative leaders at the election on October 15th. and thus prevent their influencing the form of the constitution which was to be adopted at the next Congress. These efforts were successful in some instances. Mr. Johnston was not only defeated in Chowan, but his defeat was celebrated, says Dr. McRee, "with riot and debauchery, and the orgies were concluded by burning him in effigy" Burke was excluded in Orange, and Spencer in Anson. William Johnston was returned for Hillsboro only after a vigorous contest, followed by a petition against his return. Abner Nash in New Bern, and Thomas Jones in Chowan were also vigorously opposed but were successful, as were Archibald Maclaine in Brunswick and William Hooper in Wilmington. (In a majority of the central and western counties, however, the Radical element predominated and was successful at the polls. (When Congress met then on November 12th, 1776, a majority of its membership was radical. On the 13th it was determined by a vote of 17 counties to 8, that all questions for the future should be settled by voice and not by counties and towns. Richard Caswell, Thomas Person, Allen Jones, John Ashe, Abner Nash, Wiley Jones, Thomas Jones, Simon Bright, Christopher Neale, Samuel Ashe, William Haywood, Griffith Rutherford, Henry Abbot, Luke Sumner, Thomas Respis, Jr., Archibald Maclaine, James Hogan, and Hezekiah Alexander were on the same day appointed a committee to form a Bill of Rights and a Constitution. Hewes, Harnett, Sharpe, Spicer, Waightstill Avery, Mr. Eaton, Mr. Birdsong, and Mr. Irwin were afterwards added to this Committee. On December 6th Thomas Jones for the committee reported the form of a constitution, and it was debated at set times until the 18th, when it was adopted. Samuel Johnston, who was one of the treasurers of the state, had come on to Halifax to settle his accounts, saw a copy of this constitution at the time it was introduced, and was content with it, except one provision, that allowing the justices of the counties to be elected by the people of the county. In the House, this provision was stricken out, and a substitute adopted requiring them to be appointed by the governor upon recommendation of

the representatives of the county, and that they should hold their office during good behavior. It is quite probable that this was the only material amendment made by the Congress, though in the progress of debate it appears from the journal that it was amended three times. The Declaration of Rights was reported on the 12th, amended only once and adopted on the 17th. It is perfectly evident from this recapitulation of the main facts which led up to the adoption of the Constitution of 1776, that a great change had been wrought in the sentiment of the leading men of the state, between the congress of April and that of November. And it seems to me that the secret of the change is to be found in the fact that in April they had few precedents to guide them, whereas in November they had the constitutions of South Carolina, Virginia, Delaware and New Jersey. With these it was much easier to form a constitution which would be satisfactory to a majority of the members of Congress, than it would be to make one out of material to be found at large, or to be evolved out of their inner consciousness, as was the case in April. The truth is that the precedent set by these previously adopted constitutions, particularly the Virginia Constitution, and Bill of Rights, one written by George Mason and the other by Thomas Jefferson, and none of which was more democratic than the N. C. constitution, presented the most convincing argument to the radical element in the November Congress. The very fact that so important a measure as a constitution should be discussed in Congress only parts of four days and should be amended only three times shows this. The Declaration of Rights went through even more expeditiously, and I doubt exceedingly whether any more important amendment was made to it than to change its title from Bill of Rights to Declaration of Rights, the reason for which is evident.

The Declaration of Rights was an adaptation of the fundamental principle of British liberty to a new form of government in which the people were to be supreme. The constitution minimized the executive power to the lowest point possible, consistent with any efficiency at all, while it secured the absolute independence of the judiciary—radical in the first instance, conservative

in the last. It created two electorates, one for the Senate, based on ownership of a freehold interest in fifty acres of land within the county, six months before the election and twelve months residence; the other for the house of commons, on free manhood, coupled with twelve months residence and public tax payment. It gave the General Assembly sole power to elect all state officers, generals and field officers of the militia, all officers of the regular army of the state, judges and practically all justices of the peace, for they could be commissioned by the governor only upon recommendation by members of the Assembly. To be eligible as senator, one must have possessed in fee 300 acres of land; as member of the House, 100 acres, either in fee or for the term of the proposed member's own life. The only check provided on the enormous power given the General Assembly, a body of the larger land owners, was annual elections. "After all," says Samuel Johnston, "it appears to me that there can be no check on the representatives in a Democracy, but the people, themselves, and in order that the check may be more efficient, I would have annual elections." I will return to this a little later when I come to discuss the constitution in its larger aspects. Each county was to be represented by one senator and two members in the House, while the towns of Edenton, New Bern, Wilmington, Halifax, Hillsboro and Salisbury were continued as Boroughs and each was entitled to one representative in the House. The governor must be thirty years of age, must have resided in the state more than five years and own a freehold interest in land of a greater value than \$2000. He was to be elected annually, and was ineligible for re-election more than three years in any six years. These briefly stated were the general features of this constitution, and it is evident that it is, largely, the work of the Conservative minority, rather than the Radical majority, though Mr. Johnston does write of the Congress which adopted it,—“Every one who has the least pretensions to be a gentleman is suspected and borne down *per ignobile vulgus*, a set of men without reading, experience or principle to govern them.”

Viewing the completed work of this Halifax Congress, at large, and in the light of the conditions and difficulties under which it

labored, it is imposing in its simplicity, in its adaptability and in its foresight. It can not, strictly, be called democratic as we understand the term, but it was progressive, as compared with the existing English conception of the state, with landownership as its sole foundation. Though progressive, it remained still a state whose constituent elements were found rather in its culture than in its people as a mass. It was a representative republic, founded on landownership and free manhood and tax paying suffrage. The governing body was the Assembly, and the individual tax payer had as much to do with the selection of that, as had the landowner, he being specifically represented in the House of Commons. while the landowner was specifically represented in the Senate; and it must be remembered, too, that at that time land was so abundant and so cheap, that only the shiftless could not own a freehold interest in fifty acres of land. The only provisions, that, in any reasonable view, tend towards an aristocracy, are those which require the governor to own \$2,000 worth of land, Senators 300 acres and Members of the House 100 acres.

Taken as a whole, this Constitution was a distinct contribution to the political science of the times. The fundamental rights of man, according to all writers, except the Socialists who were not then known, are the rights of personal liberty, personal security and private property. A scheme of government which should fail to provide adequate security for property would be as defective as one that would fail to safeguard personal liberty and personal security. Not that property should be exalted above the man, but that it should have equal protection from the state. Now where a population is illiterate, inexperienced, untried, as, speaking generally and comparatively, a majority of the people of North Carolina were then, property has no adequate protection under a government founded on universal suffrage, and, lacking protection from the state, it proceeds to protect itself by corrupting and debauching the voters and their leaders, or bosses, as is the expressive modern term. It buys votes either at the polls, or in the halls of the legislature. The makers of the constitution of 1776 knew this, as well as we know it now when the whole country has been, for years, ringing with the disclosures of corruption on al-

most every hand, all of which, in my opinion, is directly traceable to the conferring of the suffrage upon a foreign and inexperienced, or a reckless and unscrupulous, electorate. Some of us are applying the hair of the dog to the bite,—in the initiative, referendum and recall. It is curious that all these are based upon the principles announced by Samuel Johnston in 1776, though derived by him from Montesqueiu,* that there can be no check upon the democracy but the people themselves, and therefore he would have annual elections. We departed from this most democratic principle in the Constitution of 1776, at the behest of Business, but now we are to return to it, as a protection against Business.

In limiting the suffrage, then, the makers of the Constitution of 1776 were wise, in their day and generation.

They were wise also in this:—they were not frantic Reformers, but sober, earnest builders. They did not then reject the tried material at their hands, but used it and shaped it and fitted it into their new building. Only one stone of it did they discard absolutely and replace with something new. They cast aside as useless rubbish the sovereignty of the king and chose, instead, the sovereignty of the people.

Said Julius Hare, many years ago:—"If a government is to stand a storm, it should have a strong anchorage; and that is only found in the past." Again they were wise in understanding the nature of a Bill of Rights and of a constitution. (To them the Declaration of Rights was a "charter of liberties to the individual, and a limitation upon the power of the state," while "the Constitution was the fundamental law of the state, containing the principles upon which its government was to be based and regulating the division of the sovereign powers, directing to what persons each of these powers is to be confided and the manner in which it is to be exercised." They stated in the plainest and most direct language the principles upon which they had deter-

*The copy of Montesqueiu: Spirit of the Laws, read by the writer, had formerly belonged to Governor Abner Nash, his ancestor, and no doubt was used by him while the Constitution was being constructed.

mined to found the government, provided the simple machinery therefor, and then stopped. / Nowhere in it appears that modern distrust of legislatures, which manifests itself by including in constitutions matters that should be left to legislation as more responsive to the people's will. Changed conditions and the new problems which they present may call for a modification of the machinery of government. They can never be an adequate excuse for making the fundamental law so minute and elaborate, as to constitute it a hindrance to beneficial legislation, instead of a promoter of it. (Elaboration of constitutions, now, really shows as much distrust of people's capacity for self-government, as suffrage restriction did in the older constitutions. If the widespread, insistent, almost blatant, demand for the people's control in all governmental affairs is not pure cant and hypocrisy, politics for politics sake, the next great movement will be towards the simplification of our fundamental law—a return, indeed, to first principles, from which we have greatly departed.)

It is impossible now to specify with particularity the part any one of the great men, who considered the subject, took in the formation of the Constitution of 1776. We are familiar with the points of view of Samuel Johnston and Thomas Jones through McRee's *Life of Iredell*.* We know that Thomas Burke was very much interested in the legislative plan, and that Cornelius Harnett was largely responsible for limiting the executive power. Beyond this all is surmise. From Richard Caswell's recognized prominence and ability, as well as the fact that he was the first governor under the constitution, we may safely infer that his great influence was exerted in its formation and adoption. The same may be said, though less positively, in regard to Abner

*All the evidence tends to show that Thomas Jones took the leading part in the making of the Constitution. "They" [the Declaration of Rights and Constitution] says Jones in his *Defense*, page 287, "are said to come from the pen of Thomas Jones, aided and assisted by Willie Jones. I find in one of Governor Johnston's letters, that he alludes to it as Jones' Constitution, and the reader will observe that Thomas Jones was throughout the organ of the committee." There is a very good sketch of Thomas Jones' life in the 4th volume of Van Noppen's *Biographical History*, page 256 *et seq.*

Nash, the second governor, who was also prominent, able and influential. The Ashes, the Joneses, Avery and Maclaine were likewise on the committee, and all of them were men of character and ability, and no doubt contributed to the final result.

Though we can not select from among these men, the names of those to whom most credit is due, nor can we truly call them great constructive statesmen, we do know and can assert with the utmost confidence that never was there a government established in the midst of a revolution, that was more moderate in form and more suited to the genius of the people for whom it was formed. That is the most pregnant circumstance in the whole matter. The wisdom of its builders was shown not only in the selection of the material from which it was built, but also in their rejection of all that was unsuited for the structure. Not brilliancy, not genius, but sound common sense and excellent judgment were shown in it all. For this, the state owes them a debt of gratitude, which it can never repay. There may have been demagogues among them, idealists, theorists and men of narrow and contracted minds and outlook, but they made no, or very little, impression upon the completed instrument. We do not do things so well in this day and generation. About half our legislation and constitution making is to provide palliatives, not remedies, for evils occasioned by former defective, or unphilosophical, legislation, enacted at the behest of the idealist, or demagogue.

Do not understand me as "viewing with alarm" the present, or as having any spasms of regret for the past. Not at all. Each period has its own problems. In our east, we have met them as they arose, effectively and well, and, as I see no signs of decay in us as individuals, or as a people, on the contrary much improvement; we may be sure that, in the fear of God, we can cope with the future and its problems as well. The tendency of the times is toward vesting more and more power in the hands of the people, and, assuming that that people is God-fearing, is experienced, is instructed, and is self-controlled, a democracy is the highest form of government, giving strength to the people and receiving strength from them. The wiser statesmanship of the times, perceiving this tendency, does not resist it, but seeks to make the

people more and more fit, and thus in the course of time it shall come to pass that there shall be no more demagogues and charlatans, no more blind partisans and self-seekers in all the land.

NOTE: In writing this paper I have used my own Hillsboro, Colonial and Revolutionary freely; have verified all assertions by the Colonial Records, and have consulted with interest and found valuable both Ashe's History and Judge Connor's Introduction to his and Mr. Cheshire's Annotated Constitution of North Carolina.

**THE GERMAN SETTLERS IN LINCOLN COUNTY
AND WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA**

BY
JOSEPH R. NIXON

THE GERMAN SETTLERS IN LINCOLN COUNTY AND WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

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THE GERMAN SETTLERS IN LINCOLN COUNTY AND WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA*

INTRODUCTION

Lincoln County is situated in the hill country of the North Carolina Piedmont Belt. Furnishing a challenge to various activities, this section is abundantly favored by nature. Two rivers form a network of cooperative streams. the Catawba along the eastern boundary, and the South Fork with tributaries across the entire central portion. Nearby mountains, in splendid view, afford material aid. To the north and west are Baker's, Carpenter's, and other peaks of the South Mountains; more distant, in solemn grandeur, lies the upturned face of the Grandfather; still more distant and higher into the vault of the heavens are the purple peaks of the great Blue Ridge. To the south rising from fertile soil among other peaks is King's Mountain, on whose historic height was fought the memorable battle of the American Revolution that broke forever the power of the English Crown in America. The whole region is supplied in great plenty with mineral springs.

Prior to the year 1750 the valleys of the South Fork and Catawba Rivers were a primal wild. These fertile stretches with vitalizing mountain air and invigorating mineral water, were the habitat of red man and wild animal. Here the Indian's arrow and tomahawk contended with the sharp tooth and lacerating foot of fierce animal. About this date, 1750, two distant streams of settlers began to flow in. The Scotch-Irish took possession of the Catawba valley in the eastern portion of the county and the valley of the South Fork, about twenty miles to the west, came the Germans, the subject of this sketch.

*This paper won the Colonial Dames Prize in 1910.

THE GERMAN MIGRATION

1. *Causes of the Migration.*

Most of the pioneer Germans came to this section from the State of Pennsylvania. Many of them and the ancestors of the others had come to America from Germany. The migration was a result of various causes. Among the dominating motives that prompted departure from the home country were the quest of adventure, desire of freedom from political oppression, and wish to escape religious persecution. Those seeking adventure, in number very few, became hunters and trappers. Here they chased the fox, hunted the bear, shot the wolf, and trapped the beaver. Political oppression in Germany had resulted in desolating wars, and had cost many Germans their homes and personal rights. In America homes could be easily obtained and a man was able to have his own political code. Hence a large number of Germans had for their prime intent the desire of good homes and liberty of government. Possibly the greatest number came to America because of religious persecution. The Germans by nature are pious people and constitutionally endowed with love of freedom of conscience. Hostilities between the home government and outside countries, and the political cruelties incident to warfare, had unbearably restricted liberty of conscience. Thus cruelly imposed on at home, the Germans were ready to brave severe hardships to secure their coveted ideals. Not simply for adventure and economic gain did these people come to America; they had at heart liberty of conscience, enjoyment of civic rights, and welfare in home and family. The sum total of the causes of this migration was a constitutional longing for freedom, for liberty. To America they came. In the language of Wordsworth, "The bosom of no sea swells like that of man set free; a wilderness is full of liberty." Braving the hardships of a perilous sea voyage, facing probable financial embarrassments, they came to America in search of domestic, civic, and religious liberty.

2. *Removal to North Carolina.*

The greater number of Germans landed in Pennsylvania; many of them, however, did not settle there. Most of the land had already been occupied and consequently was expensive to purchasers. At that early date few people dared to cross the Alleghanies for purposes of settlement; so the seekers for new homes came southward. The German pioneers reached western North Carolina and began their settlement west of the great Catawba about the year 1750. As the news of cheap lands, a fertile soil, and a healthy climate was carried back, others followed. The new settlers continuously moved hitherward until the American Revolution. Coming from Pennsylvania, they were called the Pennsylvania Dutch, and they have since been so called by themselves and others.

The course of travel southward, pursued by these early Germans, is described by Colonel W. L. Saunders in his Prefatory Notes to the Colonial Records. He says, "The route these immigrants from Pennsylvania took to reach their future homes in North Carolina is plainly laid down on the maps of that day. On Jeffrey's Map, a copy of which is in the Congressional Library at Washington City, there is plainly laid down a road called 'The Great Road from the Yadkin Valley thro' Virginia and Pennsylvania to Philadelphia, distant about 435 miles.' It ran from Philadelphia thro' Lancaster and York to Winchester, thence up the Shenandoah Valley crossing the Fluvanna River at Looney's Ford, thence to Staunton River, and down the river through the Blue Ridge, thence southward crossing Dan River below the mouth of Mayo River, thence still southward near the Moravian settlement to the Yadkin River, just above the mouth of Linville Creek, and about ten miles above the mouth of Reedy Creek."

3. *Character of the People.*

The Germans selected fine land and settled beside a stream near a spring. The bottom land was more productive and much easier worked. The stream added to the productivity of the soil; and, in addition, furnished water for the farmer's horses, cows, sheep, hogs, and poultry. The nearby spring afforded the German

a double accommodation; it aided the housewife in point of distance, and it helped the settler in case of an Indian attack, for he could better stand a siege. Some homes were built entirely over springs; a few had secret connections with water by underground passages.

In the construction of his home the German followed the usual pioneer custom and plan. The first dwellings were built of immense hewn logs, having generally a single room, a loft overhead, and at one end a great stone chimney. The timbers were usually hewn on two sides; at either end notches were cut so that the logs were interlocked in a dove tail fashion. Windows and doors were provided by cutting spaces of the desired size in the massive logs before fitting the timbers in their permanent position. Though not commodious, these dwellings were comfortable and a protection against the savage. It was not long before homes more spacious and convenient were erected. Many of these latter-mentioned structures are still standing. They are large houses near springs, painted red, characteristic of the German. Near the dwellings were erected convenient outhouses and barns. In the outhouses were stored tempting hams and bacon, wheat and corn. The barns furnished a storage for feed and accommodations for cattle and horses. The barn was often much larger the dwelling-house. The paternal dwelling almost invariably passed to one child; other children erected homes near by. There was seldom an interchange of land between families. As a result today many of the descendants of these pioneers live on the ancestral homesteads. Industrious, thrifty, economical, believers in the purity of home life, these settlers were a substantial accession to this section.

GERMAN LIFE IN NORTH CAROLINA

1. *Language.*

The German encountered many perplexing obstacles that he had to overcome as a result of settling among people new to him; one of these difficulties was to learn the most extensively used language. The predominant race found here was the English; hence, a knowledge of the English language was a necessary acquisition. Unless he acquired a practical knowledge of it, the German experienced a great disadvantage and much embarrassment in such important matters as local customs, commerce, society, and politics. The acquirement of this knowledge was an indispensable accomplishment; equally essential was the Anglicizing of his own name and many of the words and idioms he knew best. These tasks were difficult of achievement. As the German was ignorant of the English language, so likewise the English were unlearned in the German speech, and there was no mutual arbitrator or conventional device to serve as a medium for Anglicizing German names and idioms.

In learning the English language and in transforming the names and idioms into English, the German generally followed the sound of words. So then, whether translating German words into English or acquiring the new English term, the German usually spelled and pronounced the new word according to its articulate elements. This method naturally had its defects. Each people possessed a native accent and the ears of each had been trained both through sensations and percepts to that native accent. As a result, a word would have one sound to an Englishman and a slightly different sound to a German. When errors were made in pronouncing, they would frequently occur in spelling. Consequently, there followed much confusion both in spelling and in pronunciation. Many words resulted that were spelled and pronounced differently in separate parts of the country and a large number were constructed and spoken in a variety of ways in the same community.

To obtain recognition in society and politics the task of Anglicizing the names was first necessary. Retention of the original German appellation was considered too unprogressive. The rendition of the names into English was effected by different methods. In many cases the English sound of the German word became the permanent name. For instance, the name "Gantzler" was given the English sound "Cansler"; in the same way, "Pfeiffer" became Phifer; Kneip, Canipe; Krauss, Crouse; Huber, Hoover; Roedisill, Rudisill; and Jundt, Yount. In many other cases a translation of the German name into its English meaning occurred. As an example, "Zimmermann" was translated into its English equivalent "Carpenter"; likewise Kuhn became Coon; Weiss, White; Stein, Stone; Schneider, Taylor; and Freytag, Friday. Different members of the same family sometimes employed both of the above methods, one adapting his name after the English sound and the other choosing the English translation. Later, other changes were made in one or both of these adoptions; so that in the course of time many German names originally the same were, and are today, spelled in a variety of ways. As an example, one name is variously spelled as follows:—Haas, Hass, Hase, Haws, Hoss, Hoes, Hose, House, Hauss and Huss. Along with the thoughts of these changes in names, one must also remember that some Germans held to their original cognomens, as Arndt, Reinhardt, and Hartzoge.

In an article concerning them, Reverend L. L. Lohr, of Lincoln County, tells of the following event which will illustrate concisely the five classes of German names above mentioned, which are those accepted by sound, by translation, by utilization of both these methods, by resultant variation and by retention of the original cognomen. Some years ago an old gentleman living in a German section of this country held a family reunion. As he had been blessed with a great offspring, a large number attended. His name was Klein. Among those of his great-grandchildren present were Peter Klein, John Kline, Jacob Cline, John Small, George Little, and William Short.

In early ages a person had only one name. Illustrations are furnished among the Biblical characters as Adam, Solomon and

David. People were not numerous and the family or tribal unit did not necessitate more than one appellation to designate each individual. As the number increased, an additional designation became necessary to avoid confusion. Among the Germans, names were selected and given in numerous ways. Many took names from their occupations, some from animals, streams, valleys, mountains, towns, and countries; others received their names from personal appearance, characteristics, or some particular thing or event that related to them. Instances of these facts can be seen in the names mentioned in the two preceding paragraphs and in the one following. Each name is significant and has interesting history connected with its origin if it could be determined. In the bestowal of given or Christian names, Adam, Abraham, David, Joseph, John, Andrew, and other Old and New Testament names were generally selected by the Germans.

Meriting special notice because of the interest in the words themselves, the names of these German pioneers deserve particular mention because of the splendid people they represent. An alphabetical list of one hundred of those sturdy pioneers settling in Lincoln County follows: Aderholt, Anthony, Arndt, Bangel, Benick, Beisaner, Beam, Bolinger, Boyles, Botz, Cloniger, Coulter, Deilinger, Detter, Devepaugh, Deitz, Earhardt, Eddleman, Finger, Freytag, Forney, Gantzler, Gross, Haas, Hafner, Hager, Helderman, Hallman, Hartzoge, Houser, Heedick, Heil, Henkel, Hoke, Huber, Hull, Jared, Jonas, Jundt, Keener, Kever, Kilian, Kizer, Kistler, Klein, Kneip, Krauss, Kuhn, Lantz, Leeper, Lorentz, Lehnhardt, Leonard, Lingerfelt, Link, Lockman, Lohr, Long, Loretz, Lutz, Michal, Miller, Mosteller, Nantz, Plonk, Propst, Quickel, Ramsauer, Reinhardt, Reib, Rinck, Rudisill, Saine, Scheidel, Schenck, Shuffordt, Scronce, Seigel, Shrum, Seitz, Shoup, Shull, Sifford, Sigmon, Spiegel, Strutt, Summerow, Taylor, Troutman, Tutherow, Warlick, Weber, Wechesser, Wehunt, Weiss, Wetzstein, Wisenhunt, Workman, Yoder, and Zimmerman.

The general use of the English language was accompanied by the same obstacles as was that of the proper names. The German tongue, as a vital transmitter of thought by sounds, pos-

sessed native accents; and the ear, as a live receiver, had become accustomed to those articulate sounds. So that when he first began using the English language, the German experienced much difficulty in exercising the organ of hearing so as to detect properly the English articulation and in manipulating the organs of speech so as to give the correct English pronunciation. In his earliest attempts to use English, the German spoke and wrote every word just as it sounded to him. Later he learned to distinguish those mistakes resulting from his accent; and though he could not then pronounce some words properly, he could write them correctly. The acquisition of the new speech by the people as a whole was gradual. A few gained a practical knowledge in Pennsylvania before coming to North Carolina; the large number did not acquire it for some time after settling here. The obtainment and use of English by the people as a body is most noticeable between the years 1820 and 1830. Before this time their own language was generally employed among themselves, English being used only when necessity required. After these dates, English was used in nearly all their spoken and written discourse. Through this constant employment of English, the German ear and tongue have overcome most linguistic difficulties. Today the original accent and idiom have almost entirely disappeared from the lingo of Pennsylvania Dutch. This is true of men who in childhood knew no other language.

Some of the difficulties that have not yet been surmounted may be seen in the interchange of certain letters. In speaking the German will often give one particular letter the sound of a certain other; but if writing, he will in many cases use this same letter correctly. For instance, in talking of his vineyard, the German would say he cultivated "grape Wines" and that he used the fruit to make "grape Vine"; in writing, he would use these letters in a correct manner. The most common interchanges are "v" and "w", "d" and "t", "b" and "p". These letters have given the Germans great difficulty. An elderly man relates that he went to school with some Dutch boys and the teacher, in his vain attempt to make the pupils give the letter "v" its proper sound, actually used the switch. One Dutch farmer owning a

triangular piece of land asked the surveyor to "wey a little wee" (meaning "V") for him. This surveyor often assisted them in "widing" land. Other examples of the interchange of "v" and "w" are "Villiam" for "William" and "wery" for "very". The interchange of "d" and "t" are seen in the following words taken from their speech and writing, each being accompanied by the term intended: site, side; mittel, middle; toctar, doctor; teep, deep; frond, front; tiner, dinner; yart, yard; food, foot; wite, wide; and tram, dram; the use of "b" for "p" and vice versa, is illustrated in the following words: blow, plow: pene, been; bosts, posts; prast peem, breast beam; ubbar, upper; robe, rope; and peer, beer. The interchange of some of these letters can also be seen in certain of the family names of the County. Bangle and Pangle are really the same; likewise, Boovey and Poovey, Tarr and Darr. By the Pennsylvania Dutch Davy Tarr was called Tavy Tarr; it is now pronounced Derr. The reader can find an illustration of each interchange above mentioned in the following related incident. It was the custom of one venerable Dutch elder, when the preacher ascended the pulpit for the church service, to step into the door and, addressing the groups, which habitually assembled under the trees before the services began, proclaim, "De beobles will now come; te breaching is reaty."

In many German homes the German language was not entirely discarded even though English had been acquired and was used. The Germans loved their language and it was with sorrowful reluctance that they let it go. In most cases the children were taught only English. One man through whose veins flows pure German blood says his parents spoke both languages but that he never knew a word of German, and furthermore he does not like the language. Reminiscently, this German gives a conclusive reason for this aversion. He says that in childhood, when he heard his parents by the evening fireside conversing in German, his mind immediately reverted to some misconduct for he knew that they were discussing one of his youthful mistakes, and a good English whipping for him was usually the result of the German discourse.

2. *Religion and Education.*

The Germans loved their church and school. Besides the national testimony to this fact shown by the church movements and the great universities in their own land, evidences are found in the communities in which they settled in this country. The pioneer Germans were Lutherans and Reformed. These two denominations often used the same houses of worship, where on alternate Sabbaths they held their services; this is still the custom with a number of churches. Records show that they established churches and schools at a very early date. Four miles north-west of Lincolnton, these pioneers established a place of worship and a school house called "Daniel's" on a tract of fifty acres; but they neglected to take a grant for their land. In 1767, a grant was issued to Matthew Floyd for the tract. This grant had in its descriptions "including a school house". The school specified has been maintained uninterruptedly until the present day. In 1768, the tract was purchased by Nicholas Warlick, Frederick Wise, Urban Ashebanner, Peter Statler, Peter Summey, and Teter Hafner; they conveyed it to the two united congregations of Lutherans and Calvinists. On this tract each denomination has erected a brick church and near them stands a brick school house. Eleven miles east of Lincolnton on the "old plank road", and near the present Presbyterian church at Macpelah, is the site of the "Old Dutch Meeting House". The deed is from Adam Cloninger to the "German Congregation of Killian's Settlement." The deed to the first church lot in Lincolnton was made June 10, 1788. This deed conveyed the lot to Christian Reinhardt and Andrew Heedick, trustees respectively for the "societies of Dutch Presbyterians and Dutch Lutherans" of the town and vicinity. It specifically states that the transaction is to secure a place "for the intent and purpose of building thereon a meeting house for public worship, school houses, both Dutch and English, and a place for the burial of the dead." This is the site of the present Lutheran Church.

That the Germans are averse to education and mutual cooperation in advancement of public benefits is a mistaken idea. Their ignorance of the English language and customs has been length-

ened because of their constitutional reserve and tenacity of habit; but these characteristics are valuable qualities for any people.

In addition to their being historic facts, the following will serve to show some experience of German churches with the two languages. The North Carolina Synod met, May 28, 1820, in the Old White Church in Lincolnton. This session proved to be a very historic one. At this time and place occurred the first rupture of the Lutheran Church in the New World. The Lincolnton Church and others withdrew, and the following July 17, organized the Tennessee Synod. The president of the meeting maintained his position with a long discourse in German. The secretary followed with a longer one in English. Thus, the two languages were used in this discussion. The Lincolnton church and others that withdrew and formed the Tennessee Synod made specific regulations on the first day of their meeting concerning the use of the two languages. German was made the business language of the Synod, and all transactions were to be "published in the German language". In 1825, five years later, it was ordered that the minutes were to be published in both German and English. In 1826, David Henkel was appointed interpreter for the members who did not understand the German language. At this same meeting in 1826, it was ordered that the "business of Synod shall be transacted in the German language during the first three days, afterwards, the English shall be used". The church records of Daniel's Evangelical Lutheran and Reformed Churches were kept until 1827 in German.

3. *Grave Yards.*

In burying their dead the Germans followed the usual method of interment; some families used the Church cemeteries, and others had family grave yards. Soapstone or marble slabs with inscriptions of varied length bore the names of the deceased. Many of the tombstones in these burial places have German inscriptions. Those monuments earliest erected have inscriptions in good German. Later monuments had less correct German on them. A number of these inscriptions were written partly in German and partly in English. A description of a

monument in the Old White Church cemetery having inscriptions both in German and in English will be given. This stone marks the grave of a venerable and useful man, Reverend John G. Arndt. He came from Germany to Rowan County, North Carolina, and taught school there until 1775 when he was ordained to the ministry; in 1786, he moved to Lincoln County where he labored until his death in 1807. The monument has on it the following engravings. Near the top, is an eagle with outstretched wings; just above its head and wings are the words "E Pluribus Unum;" immediately above these words are thirteen stars. The eagle holds in one foot a bow and in the other some arrows. These engravings constitute the emblem of the new republic, "The United States of America", which had not been in existence many years before Mr. Arndt's death. The inscription reads:

"Hier ruhet der Leichnam das weiland wohl ehrwürdigen Johann Godfried Arends. treu gewesener evangelischer Prediger. er starb am 9ten Julii A. D. 1807. sein Alter 66 Jahr 6 monat und 28 Tag. an einer auszehrenden Krankheit nachdem er 32 Jahr das Predigamt mit aller treue verwaltet." A verse in English that occurs in substantially the same form on many German stones then follows:

"Remember man as you pass by
As you are now so once was I
As I am now you soon will be
Therefore, prepare to follow me."

4. *Occupations.*

The Pennsylvania Dutchman in the early days depended naturally for his livelihood upon farming. Being industrious, thrifty, and not fearing labor, he was generally a very successful farmer. As the clear summer sun ascended above the eastern horizon blinkingly, the Dutch farmer arose rubbing his eyes; likewise when the peaceful sun descended below the western hills, the Dutch farmer sank into a well-earned sleep. There was no contempt for honest toil. In his general work, the Dutch

farmer was a close observer. He consulted his almanac, believed in signs, and relied on the twelve signs of the zodiac. Whether these beliefs were beneficial or not, he held tenaciously to them, and attributed part of his success to these observances. The people give less attention now to these signs than they formerly did, and many of the superstitious ideas are being forgotten. Some of the signs and omens follow:

All vegetables that grow downward under the earth's surface, such as turnips, potatoes, and radishes, must be planted in the dark of the moon, in the interim of the new and full moon. Vegetables that grow above the ground, such as beans, peas, and cabbage, should be planted in the light of the moon. Plant onions when the points of the moon are turned downwards; then the onion will grow large and the plant will not run into all seed and top. If corn is planted when the little moon is turned down the stalks will be long and the ears large. If you grind wheat in the dark of the October moon, bugs and worms will get into the flour. Hang up all the horseshoes you find in the road; pick up all the pins; look at the moon in the clear; these things bring good luck. Do not begin work on Friday unless you can finish it; do not look at the moon through trees; do not turn back after beginning a journey; these things bring bad luck.

A famous turnip grower living in Lincoln County seldom fails to secure a good crop. With the moon right and the soil prepared while scattering the seed he uses an incantation of virtue. When he made this known it became evident that he sowed a fourfold quantity of seed. Each time he scatters a handful of seed he repeats a line of the following:

“Some for de bug
Some for de fly
Some for de debil
And in comes I.”

As the country developed and people became more numerous, the Germans entered other occupations. Daniel Warlick, a pioneer German settler and progenitor of the Warlick family in this section, erected at an early date a grist mill on a branch about six miles northwest of what is now Lincolnton. This mill was

once burned by the Indians. The location is excellent, having as power a waterfall of sixty-two feet. This mill has passed from father to son and is today owned by a great-grandson, Jacob R. Warlick.

The first cotton mill south of the Potomac river was erected by a descendent of these Germans. This mill, run by water power, was built by Michael Schenck in 1813 on a branch about one mile east of Lincolnton.

Many Germans conducted tan yards along the side of streams, and slight depressions which mark the original vats may be seen today. Other Dutchmen operated saw mills, conducted blacksmith shops, constructed chairs, made shoes, and so on. The following paragraph, aside from its principal topic, will give light on another occupation in which the Dutch excelled.

In the good days of the old time, the distillery was an important and necessary adjunct of the farm. Liquor was plentiful and only twenty-five cents per gallon, and was regarded as almost as necessary as people of this time regard coffee and tea. The fiery fluid which they drank for health and happiness was a requisite of the domestic board, and a "tram" was a symbol of hospitality. When the old patriarch, Derrick Ramsour, dispensed with his still, he stipulated that his sons should furnish him each year with twelve gallons of whiskey. William Hager, who died in 1775, having made distribution of his lands and other estate and come to the allotment of his distillery, in tender and affectionate regard, briefly yet specifically said: "I leave the still for the benefit of the family whilst my wife keeps house with the children." The old pioneer, Henry Weidner, who discovered Henry River, now bearing his name, and who was known as "King of the Forks," devised a large estate in 1790 among his children. He enhanced the dowry of his only single daughter by this bequest: "I likewise give unto my daughter Mollie my two stills and all the still vessels." Distilling was not confined however to any particular section or nationality; and, sad to relate, the manufacture of the beverage was not confined entirely to the laity. Soon after the Revolution, an ordained minister, owning

a thousand acres of choice land, "conducted a saw mill, cotton gin, tan yard, blacksmith shop, and a distillery." One distinguished minister of the gospel, among other items of maintenance, required that his wife be furnished on January first of each and every year "ten gallons of good whiskey." A blow was given the industry 1858 when the church courts adopted the resolution, "Resolved that the making or distillation for indiscriminate sale of intoxicating liquors, its use as a beverage, the practice of giving it to hands at log rollings, huskings, raisings, etc., is immoral in its tendency, and justifies the exercise of discipline." The war of prohibition has gathered intensity until intoxicants have been swept from the State; so that when the governors of the Carolinas met on the border at King's Mountain the seventh of October, 1910, and the Governor of South Carolina made the ancient remark to the Governor of North Carolina, the latter could respond with only a glass of sparkling water dipped from the mountain spring.

5. *Amusements.*

The early German experienced many hardships and much rigid toil; yet he found time for fun and sports. Whole-hearted in his labor, he was equally so in his amusements. His social entertainments possessed very little, if any, of the caste system. Every one was free and at ease. Formality could not survive among these lovers of liberty. Special occasions that brought them together were quilting parties, spinning matches, corn shuckings, log rollings, and house raisings. Such events not only afforded opportunity for free interchange of social discourse, but also furnished to participants the advantage of development in useful skill and of material gain. They strove to be the first to complete their quilts, or to shuck their allotment of the pile of corn. It was a matter of pride and prestige to be able to hew the timbers most evenly and to raise the log houses most quickly. Amidst these contending activities, they ever indulged in pleasant discourse. The enjoyable hospitality of the homes and the feeling of freedom of every one made such events happy and delightful. These

meetings were also enjoyed by the old, always hale and hearty, for they said:

"A little nonsense now and then
Is relished by the best of men."

Another form of amusement was horse-racing. The Germans were lovers of fine horses, and the race track had its devotees. On the path they would test the speed of horses, and back favorites with cash. When any trouble arose, the guilty ones, if they were members, would be summoned before their church officers. This was the case with two well known men of the Daniel's neighborhood. The "Warlick Path" was one mile west of Daniel's church and about four miles from Lincolnton. A race between their horses about a dispute and they were promptly summoned before the church bar for their conduct. The one who lost was penitent and before the church court expressed proper contrition. The winner was incorrigible. Proud of his stakes, his horse, and the plaudits of the community, he promptly pleaded: "I'm not sorry; I von. Mr. H. verry sorry; he lose." The habitual calmness of temperament, however, prevented many troubles among neighbors.

6. *Prominent Germans.*

In the early history of this section, the Germans were not prominent in public affairs. They did not know the prevailing language and law. When these obstacles were removed, their true worth was realized. From these sturdy settlers have sprung many men distinguished in church, in state, on the battlefield, and in the various walks of life. Their conservative temperament was not an impediment when they became acquainted with English people; combined with a willingness to push forward when sure of the ground they were on, this quality made them the sort of citizens desirable to any people. Brief mention of a few prominent Germans and descendents follow.

Jacob Forney settled on Killian's Creek, near the present town of Denver. On the early maps the great Catawba marked the tribal division between the Catawbas and the Cherokees. East of the river dwelt the Catawbas, once a numerous and powerful peo-

ple. As the white settlements extended, the Cherokees receded towards the setting sun, and occupied the peaks of the Blue Ridge from which roving bands raided the settlements. Jacob Forney and two of his neighbors were attacked by a band of Cherokees. One of them was wounded and scalped. Forney, though shot at many times by the Indians, reached his log hut in safety. He subsequently located a few miles down the creek. He and his sons were firm Whigs in the American Revolution. Cornwallis and the English army on their passage through Lincoln County, in pursuit of Morgan, quartered on Jacob Forney three days and took much of his property. Jacob Forney, with many of his neighbors, was buried in the "Old Dutch Meeting House Graveyard" in east Lincoln County. His farm, near Denver, passed to his son, Captain Abraham Forney, a soldier of the Revolution; and it yet belongs to his descendants. General Peter Forney, another son, was a patriot soldier, member of the House, Senate, and Congress. As Presidential elector, he voted for Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Jackson. He erected a forge at his home and Madison Furnace on Leeper's Creek. He was a pioneer iron-master, and commenced building his own iron works in 1787. He recorded that he produced hammered iron in his forge the twenty-sixth of August, 1788. Major Daniel Forney, eldest son of General Peter Forney, received his title in the War of 1812; he served as senator from Lincoln County and a member of Congress. He erected a palatial residence on an eminence between two creeks where Jacob Forney lived when the British quartered on him. This picturesque old mansion with its tall white columns yet retains the charm of its ancient architecture. Jacob, son of General Peter Forney, was sheriff of Lincoln County. He removed to Alabama where two of his sons, John and William, were Confederate generals and Members of Congress. The daughters of General Peter Forney married Henry Y. Webb, Bartlett Ship, William Johnston, C. L. Hunter, and Christian Reinhardt, all historic figures in the county and state. Robert D. Johnston, son of Dr. William Johnston and Nancy Forney, was a distinguished brigadier general in the Confederate army.

In the House of Commons near the close of the century the fol-

lowing Germans were representatives from Lincoln County: 1797, John Ramsour was elected and served two terms. In 1799, John Reinhardt was sent, and, in 1800, Peter Forney. Peter Hoyle was elected in 1802 and fourteen times afterwards. Henry Hoke was representative in 1803, David Shuford in 1806; then followed Lorentz, Killian, Cansler, and others.

Henry Cansler filled the offices of county surveyor, sheriff, clerk of the court, and member of the General Assembly.

Jacob Costner was one of the first justices of the peace of Tryon County; he was sheriff of Tryon in 1774 and 1775, major of militia of Tryon in 1776; he died in 1777. Ambrose Costner, his great grandson, planter and financier, was often the popular representative of Lincoln County in the House and Senate.

John F. Reinhardt is a great grandson of Christian Reinhardt, "agent of the Dutch Presbyterians" in the deed to the first church in Lincolnton and known as the Old White Church. He was a soldier in the Civil War, a planter, commoner, and senator. He owns the Bartlett Ship homestead. His father, Franklin Reinhardt, operated the Rehobeth furnace.

Andrew Heedick, a great grandson of Andrew Heedick, "agent of the Dutch Lutherans" in the deed to the first church in Lincolnton, resides on the ancestral homestead. He served in the Civil War, losing an arm at Chancellorsville. He is a survivor of a usually mortal wound, a musket ball having passed entirely through his body; Abel Seagle and David Keener are survivors of like wounds. Andrew Heedick was for many years county treasurer and is one of Lincoln County's most honored citizens.

John F. Hoke, son of Colonel John Hoke, was a captain in the Mexican War, commanding his company with valor in the battles of Cerro Gordo, Tolema, and National Bridge. He was Adjutant General of North Carolina and colonel in the Civil War. He was an able lawyer and was often the representative of Lincoln County in the General Assembly. Michael Hoke, son of Colonel John Hoke, was an accomplished lawyer and brilliant orator. He was one of the two opposing gubernatorial candidates in the campaign of 1844. He and his opponent, William A. Graham, were both natives of Lincoln County.

David Shenck, son of Michael Shenck, the pioneer cotton mill man, contributed his quota of loyal service to his country and state. He was a good lawyer in the court room, a great advocate at the bar, and a capable judge of the Superior Court. He did a lasting service to the state's record in the capacity of historian.

In the great Civil War two of the Germans from the South Fork valley became famous Confederate officers, winning the rank of Major General. These were Stephen D. Ramseur and Robert F. Hoke. General Ramseur met the death of a hero on the battle field. General Hoke still lives in his native county. A gallant soldier, a modest gentleman, he has an abiding place in the affection of the people.

On the Supreme Court Bench of this state is another honored and highly-respected member of the Hoke family. He is esteemed by the immediate section of his home for his kindly interest in and friendly consideration of both young and old; by the county for his sincere regard for its welfare and development; and by the state because of the unbiased prosecution of his duties. Judge William A. Hoke is a splendid representative of the true type of magnificent manhood. As citizen, lawyer, legislator, judge of the Superior Court, and associate justice of the Supreme Court, he has an enviable record.

The foregoing sketch treats of the Pennsylvania Dutch in a general way. The intent is to discuss them principally as a body of people. This general discussion mentions their arrival in Pennsylvania from Germany and later settlement in western North Carolina; some view is given of them and their contribution to the state. The succeeding treatise sketches a prominent German family. The record of this family illustrates many of the general facts above mentioned, and, as it is typical of German families, will serve to localize ideas presented in the preceding discussion.

THE RAMSOUR FAMILY

1. *Derrick Ramsour.*

The Ramsours trace their descent from the earliest settlers in this section. This was Derrick or Deitrich Ramsour, a pioneer German settler. He came from Germany to Pennsylvania, and thence to Lincoln County, North Carolina. He was a shrewd, sound, thrifty, far-sighted man, and gained possession of many acres of land by entry and purchase. He erected a pioneer grist mill on one of his plantations on Clark's Creek. Power to run the machinery was furnished by a race which ran in a semi-circular course a few yards west of the present bridge on public road. The south-west abutment of the bridge is situated on the exact spot formerly occupied by the foundation of one side of the building. This mill was a noted place in colonial times. Derrick Ramsour had four sons and probably some daughters. His sons were Jacob, David, Henry and John.

Derrick Ramsour, in 1771, "out of natural love and affection", divided his land between his two surviving sons, Jacob and David. In consideration of this grant, he received a bond entered into by Jacob and David providing for his support during the remainder of his life. As this bond portrays in some degree the character of Derrick Ramsour as being shrewd and businesslike in transactions, and also furnishes some idea of various things used in life on farms of this section in 1772, the greater part of it is printed.

The bond provided that Jacob and David Ramsour pay unto Derrick Ramsour every year during his natural life: "15 pounds proclamation money, 25 bushels clean, sound wheat, 25 bushels Indian corn, 52 pounds of good butter, or in lieu thereof the profits on two good milch cows to be kept at the expense of Jacob and David, 400 weight of good, wholesome beef, one-sixth of the net profits of the fruit trees, 30 pounds of sugar, 3 pound Bohea tea, 2 pounds coffee, 12 gallons whiskey, 4 bushels of malt, 1 bushel of salt." Also they engage to erect a "commodious and conven-

ient residence for him the said Derrick Ramsour in order to live retired with a sufficient store, and store room, and furnish the same with the necessary furniture sufficient for his accommodation which building is to be erected on such a part of the premises as he the said Derrick pitch upon." Also they are to find for him "one good feather bed and decent and necessary furniture, and find and provide for him sufficient fire wood, ready hauled to his dwelling, to be cut a foot length as often as occasion or necessity shall require; and also supply him with a gentle riding horse, saddle and bridle, to carry him wheresoever he may require him to go, together with a sufficient and necessary stock of wearing apparel, both woolen and linen, warm and decent, becoming a man of his circumstances to wear, together with the proper food and washing during his natural life."

In consideration of their fulfilling the terms in bond, Derrick Ramsour divided his estate between the two living sons. Jacob Ramsour, who was to support the father, received the Lambeth plantation between the South Fork River and Clark's Creek. Derrick Ramsour had obtained this tract of land from Andrew Lambeth as reference to description in deed of conveyance from Derrick shows. It reads: "Situate in the fork of the South Fork of the Catawba River and Clark's Creek, heretofore conveyed by Andrew Lambeth by deed of date 11 of August 1758, etc." The other son, David, was given a plantation further up the river.

Jacob Ramsour.

Jacob Ramsour, one of the two sons living at Derrick's death, carried out the provision of the bond and erected for his father "the commodious and convenient residence" near his own immense dwelling. The site of the Jacob Ramsour mansion and the spacious residence of his father Derrick was an elevated spot a few hundred feet west of the Ramsour Mill. These buildings were accidentally destroyed many years ago by fire, but the depression of each foundation is clearly marked today. They were pointed out by an aged descendant of the family who well remembers them in their stately grandeur.

Jacob Ramsour's plantation adjoins the corporate limits of the present town of Lincolnton. The South Fork River in a great bend forms its junction with Clarke's Creek. Between these two streams was the Jacob Ramsour tract of land, today one of the finest plantations in Lincoln county. The mill erected by his father Derrick was situated on this plantation and was continued in operation by Jacob. About eight years after passing into his ownership, and while Jacob still ran it, here was fought June 20, 1780, between the Whigs and Tories the battle of Ramsour's Mill. This spot was also made historic in January, 1781, about a month before the Battle of Cowan's Ford on the Catawba River in East Lincoln County, as the camping ground of Lord Cornwallis and the English army.

Jacob Ramsour died January 5, 1787, in the fifty-fourth year of his age. The grave-yard in which he was interred is about two hundred yards westward from the site of his residence. This grave-yard is on the highest point between the creek and the river—about one half mile from each—and is in full view of Lincolnton.

David Ramsour.

David Ramsour, the other son of Derrick and a party to the bond, received a plantation about four miles up the South Fork River and that one given to Jacob Ramsour. This plantation was also situated in a great bend of the river and had in it many acres of most fertile land. He was one of the first settlers in this immediate section. He erected a dwelling on this farm of the pioneer type. This house, made of timbers from the primitive forest, stands today. It is a log cabin, one story in height, with loft overhead. The great stone chimney is entirely within the building except that part extending above the roof. The fire place measures about seven feet. Just above the fire place is a large wooden mantel, made from a hewn log about six inches square and nine feet long. A short distance up the chimney are cross bars; from these in times past were suspended pot hooks which held the cooking utensils in position over the fire. The location is an ideal one. It is a knoll commanding a fine view of the

picturesque surroundings. A gentle slope leads down to the river which is about forty yards distant. Nearby is a beautiful rock walled spring with pretty stone steps leading down to its crystal waters. Shading the spring are two giant white oaks from the original forest.

The above location was selected by David Ramsour. Near it stood an old red painted mansion, characteristic of the early Germans, built by his son, John Ramsour, every part of which was put together with hand forged nails. This building has in recent years been removed by the present owner, Thomas J. Ramsour, and another frame building erected on the same foundation. A short distance up the river is a modern brick residence built by Jacob Ramsour, a mill-wright and a grandson of David Ramsour. About one half mile eastward a large and convenient residence embodying all the latest architectural conceptions has recently been completed by Thomas J. Ramsour, a great grandson of David. The above mentioned houses are all situated on the ancestral estate, namely the land of the pioneer Derrick Ramsour. These buildings are suggestive of the fact that their respective constructors kept abreast with the progressive ages from before the Revolution through all the labors in peace and horrors in war until the present day. An equal to that vivid and impressive view gained from the yard of the earliest erected home would be hard to find. These four buildings, the log cabin of ancient architecture, the frame building, the brick house of modern design, and the recently completed home with latest improvements, all situated on the ancestral estate, are in easy view of each other and represent four generations of this noble family.

David Ramsour married Mary W. Warlick. To them were born four sons and three daughters, viz.: John, David, Henry, Philip, Margaret, Elizabeth, wife of Daniel Shuford, and Barbara, wife of Jonas Heedick. He died December 14th, 1788, aged fifty-three years, and was buried in a graveyard on his plantation. This burying ground occupies a gentle knoll in the great bottom. It is called the Ramsour Graveyard, Here are buried many generations of this branch of the Ramsour family. A few inscriptions from tombs with other notes will indicate part of the David Ramsour family history.

Mary M. Ramsour, wife of David, was buried beside him. She died October 10th, 1818, aged seventy-two years. She was the daughter of Daniel Warlick, the pioneer settler and progenitor of the Warlick family in this part of the State. Daniel Warlick erected the grist mill previously mentioned in this sketch.

Margaret Ramsour, daughter of David, died at the age of twelve years on the 22nd day of December, 1780. Thus her decease occurred five months after the battle of Ramsour's Mill. Her grave was the first one in the cemetery. According to the family tradition, the river was swollen at the time of her death and, as her remains could not be transported across the stream to Daniel's Church for interment, this place was selected for her last resting place. When buried she was the one silent resident of this hallowed spot; but it has since grown into quite a city of the dead.

John Ramsour, son of David, succeeded to his father's estate and erected near the log cabin the frame building already mentioned. He was a prominent planter and represented Lincoln County in the General Assembly of this State. He married Elizabeth, née Heedick. They and their four sons, John, Jacob, Andrew, and Daniel, were buried in the family graveyard. The following very brief mention of these sons and several of their descendants will connect with the present generation. Daniel, son of John, was born August 18th, 1806, and died January 12th, 1874. Daniel inherited the paternal estate, and lived in the house erected by his father. He married Frances A. Shuford, who was born August 16th, 1814, and departed this life July 30th, 1903. These are the parents of Thomas J. Ramsour, present owner of the ancestral homestead, a member of the fourth generation of David and constructor of the latest erected dwelling heretofore mentioned. Andrew Ramsour, son of John, married Sarah Ramsour, and to them were born two daughters, Isabella and Annie; they married Michal and John Boger, respectively, both men of prominence in Lincoln County. Jacob Ramsour, son of John, was a millwright, and to distinguish him from the other Jacobs, he was called "Millwright Jacob." His farm in the river bottom lay next above the ancestral homestead. This place was purchased by Sheriff Robinson and is today owned by Thomas E.

Cline. He was the father of Theodore J., Oliver A., Walter G., and Mel Ramsour, all Confederate soldiers.

Theodore J. Ramsour, son of "Millwright Jacob," was born March 12th, 1832, and died May 27th, 1908, aged seventy-six years. He married Polly Canipe. To this union were born ten children, five sons and five daughters, all of whom are living today. Theodore J. Ramsour was a veteran of the Civil War. He enlisted at the first call for volunteers, April 25th, 1861, in Company K of the Bethel Regiment. After serving the term of this enlistment he re-enlisted in Company I, 11th Regiment, March 21st, 1862, in which he served until he lost a leg at Cold Harbor, June 21st, 1865. He lived on the east bank of the river, about one mile above the Ramsour Graveyard. He was a fine farmer, and also owned and operated a mill run by the power of the South Fork.

The inscription on the tomb of Walter G. Ramsour, son of "Millwright Jacob," reads as follows: "In memory of Walter George, son of Jacob Ramsour, born June 2nd, 1836; second man to volunteer in Company K., first N. C. Regiment; re-enlisted and was second Sergeant in Company I., 11th Regiment. Wounded at Bristow Station October 14th, 1863, died October 27th, 1863, aged 27 years, four months and two days." This inscription is especially interesting. It records the fact that Walter Ramsour was the second man of all the Lincoln County soldiers to volunteer. Reading this inscription gives rise to the question as to who was the soldier entitled to rank as the first volunteer from Lincoln County.

Henry Ramsour, son of David and grandson of Derrick, lived on the east bank of the river. Opposite to him was his brother David's place. Henry Ramsour died May 30th, 1828, aged fifty-eight years. He married Magdalene Shuford and has many descendants. Solomon Ramsour, their son, who died September 8th, 1845. at the age of forty-six years, married Elizabeth Warlick; they are the parents of Henry E. Ramsour, of Lincolnton, and others.

The above rapid survey of the Ramsour family gives brief mention of Derrick Ramsour, his two sons, Jacob and David, and a

few connecting links with the present generation. From these two sons of Derrick have descended nearly all the Ramsours of this State. The following history, continuing with the Ramsours, deals only with the other two sons of Derrick.

Henry and John Ramsour.

Henry Ramsour and John Ramsour, the other two sons of Derrick Ramsour, have been almost entirely unknown until recently. Both of them died prior to the year 1772. There is no evidence that either ever married. They are not known to the kith and kin of this generation. What is given here of them is gathered from authentic records.

Scarcely any information is to be found of Henry Ramsour. The only substantiation of his existence is a reference to him in one of the Derrick Ramsour 1772 settlement deeds. In a deed from Jacob and David Ramsour to their father Derrick referring to a tract of land, occurs the following description: "Heretofore granted by David Jones, Sheriff, to Henry Ramsour now deceased, by him bequeathed to John Ramsour, now deceased, and his two surviving brothers, Jacob and David." This single reference shows authentically that there was a Henry Ramsour, that he was a son of Derrick, that he at one time owned land in Lincoln County, and that he died prior to 1772. An absence of records and traditions concerning him furnishes the probability that Henry Ramsour never remained long in the South.

John Ramsour, son of Derrick, was as little known as Henry Ramsour for a long lapse of time. The deed above referred to regarding Henry Ramsour also mentions John Ramsour. Fortunately much information concerning him valuable in many particulars has been recently found. In a trunk among some old papers was discovered a few years ago the diary of John Ramsour. This book, yellow with age, is bound in buckskin and contains forty-seven pages. One supporting cover of the book is extended around the free edges of the pages as a protection and, narrowing, is inserted through a small opening into the other cover on the style of a large purse. This diary is at least one hundred and

fifty-eight years old. The entries in the main are very clear and legible. The book describes two journeys of John Ramsour from Pennsylvania to North Carolina and return; expenses of the trips are given; plans, specifications, and drawings for making various machines are delineated in different parts of the book; the diary also presents valuable knowledge concerning the route of travel from Pennsylvania to North Carolina, cost of equipment and expenses on the journey, and other facts that portray life at that time. Because of these interesting communications, extracts from it will be given.

On the fly leaf of the diary is the entry: "John Ramsour his Mamberranton book. August 27 day 1752 to his gorney went." Then follows an enumeration of this "trup" from "langaster," or Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, through "Marland" and "Vergeney," to this State. Those entries most nearly evidencing his destination are: "First in Carolina to a bushel of corn," "to a tiner (dinner) at yatkins," and, a few days later, the notice, "Cot to my gorneys ent to Antry Lamberts tis 6 day of October 1752." Hence, according to the diary, "Antry Lambert" lived not far distant from the Yadkin River, only a few days elapsed from the time John Ramsour crossed the Yadkin until he arrived at Lambert's home. An investigation of old deeds in Lincoln County shows that "Antry" or Andrew Lambeth, whom John Ramsour visited, owned the fertile plantation situated between the South Fork River and Clarke's Creek near their junction and adjoining the corporate limits of the present town of Lincolnton. These records further show that on the 11th day of August, 1768, this tract of land was purchased by Derrick Ramsour, father of John, from Andrew Lambeth. In 1772, Derrick Ramsour divided his valuable lands between his two surviving sons; Jacob, as previously mentioned, received this plantation. No record of the time that John Ramsour's father, Derrick Ramsour, came to this section is known. The dates from court records that succeed this early "gorney" south, which was made twenty-four years prior to the Revolutionary War, authenticate John Ramsour's owning land in Lincoln County and his father's residence and ownership of property here. The only reference in the diary of his father's

living in this section is recorded after he returned north the second time: "Receivit a lattar from my Fathar from Carolina January 27th 1755." This was three years after John Ramsour's first visit South, when his recorded destination was "Antry Lambert's." A very presumptive speculation, but interesting as a possible fact, is the conjecture that this early trip of John Ramsour to what is now Lincoln County was for the purpose of inspecting the country with a view of recommending a place for settlement to his father and family

John Ramsour's age cannot be definitely estimated; an approximate idea, however, is obtained from an entry in his diary and the above mentioned deed. A clearly legible entry in the diary is: "Born August 6 1728." Derrick Ramsour divided his property between Jacob and David in 1772, and the description in the deed speaks of John Ramsour as being then deceased; hence, he died prior to that year. According to these two dates, John Ramsour was less than forty-six years when he died. A comparison of the date of his birth with those of his brothers shows that he was seven years older than Jacob and nine years the senior of David.

John Ramsour must have been superior in many ways to the average German and pioneer settler of that time. His language is one strong indication of this, for his use of the English places him far in advance; since many Germans could hardly speak English, much less write it, at that early time. He was one of those Germans who had some education. Many of his words are a little difficult to understand; and especially so because they are not always spelled in the same way. It must be remembered, however, that he followed the sound of words and that the dictating machine to him was his own tongue with its native accent. When making the entry for the purchase of a pair of bridle bits, he naturally changed the "b" to "p," and wrote from his German accent, "to a pare of prittle bits."

From the evidences of the diary John Ramsour was a very thrifty man. The plans and specifications for making different useful machines, which are interspersed through the book, give intimation of the range of activities in which he engaged. His

knowledge of handy machines and their construction must have been valuable to the settlers at the time he visited this section. He gives the plan for "a bellows, blow, wint mill, barrel lome, skane Reale, peair of steairs, large washing toob, 10 gal cak," and other things. In designs for some of these, he gives several patterns. The plan is copied of the "blow" or plow.

"a bouth a blow the pams 4 in tick and amost 4in or 3½ deep and 7 food long and the handals long 5 food and ½ and behind from the gib the in site of the beem in straid a long the untar site before 15in the handals behind 2ft 9in or 10 or 11."

According to the entries John Ramsour made two journeys from Pennsylvania to North Carolina and return. The expenses of these trips, the objects for which expended, the kind of money used, other facts are recorded. Various provinces employed different mediums of exchange at that time; on these journeys through three provinces he used "Vergeney and Marland and Panslvaney money." For his horse he bought "a bushel of corn," "a sheve of ots"; at some places the horses were not put in barns, and one item is for "pastering horses." Of ferries at various places he records "to farrish, ferrish, and farry." Among the expenditures for himself are "to brekfast," "to a tiner," and "to supper and Loghing," "to a lucking clase" (looking glass), "to a pare of carters" (pair of garters), and, distinctive of the German, "to a almennock" (almanac). An often inserted item is that of some drink. The frequent occurrence of this item does not necessarily indicate that he was a heavy drinker. It is characteristic of the German to take drinks regularly, but in moderation, and nearly every one, as John Ramsour records of himself, took his tram, "siter," "wein," and "pere."

The entries in the diary from the title page to his arrival at destination on the first trip South will be given verbatim. These exhibit many things of interest. In the first purchases articles were evidently secured preparatory to the journey; these entries of this trip South in 1752 will give some idea of the manner in which John Ramsour made his records, the early German use of English, pioneer travel, and incident expenses. The following is a description of this first trip:

“John Ramsuuer his Mamberranton book
 August 27 day 1752 to his gorney went.
 John travelt from home to Tuch Copers 8 days.

August, 1752

To a pare of flames	2s
to a pare of prittle pits	2s
to a pare of Carters	1s
to a lucking class	1s 2d
to a quart of wein	1d
to a pocket alemnock	1d

August 27 day 1752

First to my gorney	2d
at Villiam bousman	5d
at Yorktown to a pint of pere	2d
to farrish at suskehanay	1s
to prekfast at te farry	8d
at Kouret Cansellars	1s 1d
at tis last day of te Mon, to me	1s 1d

September 1st day 1752

to a sheve of ots	4d
to a bushel of ots	2s
to one pot of siter	4d
to ferish at rapehanick	1s
to ferrish at James rever	6d
to half bushel of corn	1s

September 24th day 1752

to Suppar and loghing	1s 2d
to farrish at Rouenock	7s
First in Carolina to a half busel of corn	1s
to a tram	3d

the first of October

to my a cunt	1s 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d
to farrish at Abbes Crick	5 $\frac{3}{4}$ d

at pranius	
to corn and my a count	1s
to a tiner at yatkins	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ d
to Henry Witner	2s 5d
tis is traveling to Carlinay to expans are this	1 6s 6d
Vergeney and Marland and panselvaney money	
have pene traveling to James Rever from home eleven days	
Cot to my gorneys ent to Antry Lamberts tis 6 day of October 1752	

The first trip of John Ramsour back to Pennsylvania was begun November 1st, 1752. Hence he had remained in the South on this visit a few days less than a month. Describing this return journey some of the entries are: "to a tram 1s 3d, to farrish at James rever 6d, to farrish rappenhanick callet Babman's fort 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d, to farrish at Partommack 1s, to corn in tis Marland 3s 11d, to Conret Canseller 11d, to farrish at Suskehanney 1s, to preakfast at te farry 8d, tis is traveling from Carlinay 1 4s 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d."

John Ramsour began his second trip south May 15th, 1753. On this journey he evidently had more than one horse, as several expense items are "for pastering horses." On this second trip he remained south over a year. Probably this was the occasion of his greatest activities in Lincoln County. During this year, 1753, he had more time to construct his "wint mill, blow, washing toob," and the like. This, too, was the time most likely that he acquired land in this county.

John Ramsour returned North the following year, beginning his trip about the first of July, 1754. On his return to Pennsylvania, he records a business deal in some skins. The mention in the diary of this transaction is: "paught skins in Carlinay 33 pait for them 10 pans money solt of tham 31 for 15 19s pansylvania money." That this was a good investment as far as the

purchase and sale of the object are concerned is easily seen, for he made on this investment of ten pounds clear. Other investments on this trip North were in otter, black fox, and beaver skins. Some of these were purchased with "Vergeney" money and sold for "Pansilvania" currency. Another record that gives an interesting view of trading in these colonial days is the transaction in some beaver skins. He paid cash for these, exchanged them for some money and cloth, and then sold the cloth at a profit. The memorandum of his disposal of these purchased skins is: "Sold tham 4£ 0s 7½d and in part pay I took 42 yarts of jack lining at 1-4 par yart so come to 2£ 16s and sold that at 2s par yart."

The exact line of travel followed by John Ramsour on these journeys is definitely described by him. It is interesting to note that the course he traversed and mentioned in the diary is the same as that described by and quoted from Col. W. L. Saunders in the first part of this sketch. Evidently, then, he followed the route used by other pioneers who came south in those early times searching for cheap lands, good homes, and enjoyable freedom. John Ramsour describes his line of travel as follows:

"From langaster to rits farry 10m to yorctown 12 to fratrik-town in Cana Waka 60 to nolens or Willim luckets Farry at partommack 15 to cose krick or cose run 18 to charmington in vargenney 42 in prence willim County to nort rever of rappenhanick 8 to tuch copers 9 to the south rever of rappenhanick 6 at orresh old cort hous or vinsh to new orrensh Cort house 14 to googland Cort house at James rever 50 to lillises fort at Abbamattick rever 15 to Ameleys Corte House 10 to Tockter Coot 14 to promswick olt Cort house 4 to the hors fort at Rouneocke 25 to Cranwell court house 30 to tare Rever 16 to Flat Rever 15 to the hawe feales or to the hawe Rever 38 to teep Rever 30 to Abbents Creek 35 to the Yatkin Rever 8."

The foregoing record sketches briefly the history of the Ramsour family. It is shown that the pioneer Derrick Ramsour and his two sons Jacob and David have descended nearly all the Ramsours of this State; Henry Ramsour and John Ramsour, as mentioned

before, probably never married. This family has always had a reputation for a high type of citizenship. First and last in war and in peace, the Ramsours ever followed strenuously the dictates of their convictions. They have been noted for their manifestations of industry, thrift, and vigor, devotion to school and church. The Ramsour family from the earliest times of our history has contributed its full portion of noble ideas beautifully expressed in magnificent deeds to this county and State.

The early Germans coming to Lincoln County were such people as the family just mentioned. They had left the land of their birth because of unbearable conditions, and had come here to secure good homes and liberty of conviction. Permeated with the united desire for suitable homes and freedom of conscience, the Pennsylvania Dutch settled with common purpose on the fertile banks of the South Fork of the Catawba River in Lincoln County and in the hill country of North Carolina. In the first days of our country they were little seen in public affairs. They did not know the dominant English language, English law, and English manners. This fact together with their constitutional reserve made them for a long time slightly known and often misunderstood. Not pushing themselves into undue prominence but pursuing honorably their home duties, the Germans are and have ever been worthy citizens. The bent of the people, as one writer puts it, has ever been towards the fruitful seclusions of the rural community and the scholarly and financially profitable vocations of a peaceful life. The great virtues of the home and the common duties of the simple citizen have always charmed their ambitions. They have ever held sacred the high principles that secured to them liberty of conscience, health of the State, and safety for the morals of home and family.

In his Prefatory Notes to the Colonial Records, after describing the route the early Germans followed when they first came south, Colonel W. L. Saunders mentions an interesting event of a Civil War march and pays them a high tribute. He says: "Remembering the route General Lee took when he went into Pennsylvania on the memorable Gettysburg campaign, it will be seen that very many of the North Carolina boys, both of German and Scotch-

Irish descent, in following their great leader, visited the homes of their ancestors, and went thither by the very route by which they came away. To Lancaster and York Counties, in Pennsylvania, North Carolina owes more of her population than to any known part of the world, and surely there was never a better population than they and their descendants,—never better citizens, and certainly never better soldiers.”

Kind, benevolent, well-disposed, impelled by a persistent energy and sturdy inclination, possessing a solemn esteem for truth and devotion to religious principle, the Germans have made and are still making indestructible footprints on the varied sands of life that will remain to them a memorial for all time.



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